

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010*

**Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico**

May 19, 2010

*President Obama.* Michelle and I are extraordinarily honored as we host you, but most importantly as we host President Calderon and First Lady Margarita Zavala. Yes, I'm sorry, please be seated. We welcome them and the Mexican delegation for our second state dinner here at the White House—tonight *la Casa Blanca*. [*Laughter*]

In our visit to Mexico, the President and First Lady have treated me and Michelle to a celebration of Mexico's rich heritage, including the stunning Anthropology Museum and some wonderful mariachi. Tonight we celebrate the bonds we share as neighbors and as friends.

We celebrate all that Mexico and its ancient civilizations have given the world throughout history, advances in architecture and astronomy, mathematics and medicine, and of course, some very good food—[*laughter*—including the "food of the gods," chocolate. [*Laughter*]

As Mexico marks the bicentennial of its independence and the centennial of its revolution, we celebrate a proud people who have defined their own destiny, with patriots like Hidalgo and Juarez and giants in the arts and literature and science and, like the United States, a pretty good soccer team. [*Laughter*]

We celebrate all that Mexican Americans have contributed to the United States, leaders in every segment of our society, including many of the guests who are here tonight, and a culture that treasures family and faith. Indeed, America is enriched by *el sabor de Mexico*.

And we celebrate the partnership between our two countries. Mr. President, I must say it again: In the fight for your country's future, you've shown extraordinary courage, extraordinary bravery, and you and the Mexican people have a full and committed partner in the United States.

As we look to the future, I'm reminded of all the young people who've become part of our visits: the children in Mexico City waving American and Mexican flags; the students who shared their dreams with Michelle; and some very excited kids that, along with Michelle and Margarita, did a little exercise today. [*Laughter*] Each of those children has a dream. And yet we know that in life, it's not enough to want your dream. As the extraordinary writer Octavio Paz wrote in one of his poems, you must "deserve your dream."

And so, Mr. President, I propose a toast to the dreams of our children. Together, may we realize those dreams, and together, may we deserve them by going forward in partnership and respect.

Cheers. *Salud*.

[*At this point, President Obama offered a toast.*]

*President Calderon.* So, good evening. Your Excellency, Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, Mrs. Michelle Obama, ladies and gentlemen, I thank President Barack Obama and Michelle and also to the people from the United States of America for your invitation and the generous hospitality with which we have been welcomed during this visit.

Your courtesy, Mr. President, as that that we have received from the First Lady, honor the great friendship and partnership that brings our people together.

Today I have once again seen that we share the hope to turn this relationship between the people from the United States of America and the people from Mexico into an example of how much can be achieved among neighbors when working together under the guidance of common ideals such as peace, security, prosperity, freedom, and democracy.

Today we promote the agreements and the actions of cooperation that our countries need in order to face the new challenges to benefit fully of the enormous advantages as a result of being neighbors and the long borderline that unites us. Today, Mexico and the United States are immersed in a new stage of cooperation, and we based our efforts in the principles of shared responsibility, mutual respect, and trust.

We fully understand that our joint work has a direct impact in both populations in its well-being and happiness. We are neighbors, we are partners, we are allies, and we are also friends.

I have said this, and allow me to repeat it: We work with the certainty of what is good for the United States of America is good for Mexico, and if we understand this, at the same time, what is good for Mexico is good for the United States.

I would like to congratulate the people of the United States of America for having a President like President Barack Obama, with his leadership, which is also very positive and good for us, and at the same time, also congratulate you, Mr. President, for having a wife and a First Lady like Michelle Obama.

Thank you for your hospitality and your friendship.

*[President Calderon continued in English, as follows.]*

Mr. President, I like the phrase of Octavio Paz that one must deserve their dreams—or his dreams. I don't know if you and me deserve of dreams, but I know that both of you—both of us have dreams. Those dreams are related with our people, and we fight every day in order to deserve those dreams. And we will reach them.

*[President Calderon continued in Spanish, and his remarks were translated as follows.]*

I ask you now to raise your glasses in a toast for the happiness of both our great nations.

*[President Calderon offered a toast.]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. President Calderon spoke partly in Spanish, and those portions of his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

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